. . . come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live;
and I will make an everlasting covenant
with you . . . Isaiah 55:3

covenant

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LESSON XXX: CARE—A Positive Approach to Health

For some on the spiritual path the care of the physical body may seem to be unnecessary or at best optional. Those who understand the oneness of the physical, mental and spiritual realize that a healthy and properly attuned body is our own special instrument for spiritual attunement and helpful application and service to others. It behooves us all, then, to start exactly where we are with whatever degree of health or illness, ability or disability, that we have and to work with what is available to us now. For remember, "he who is faithful over little will be given charge over much."

I was visiting a Cayce-oriented physician in California. He showed me around his office, pointing out with great enthusiasm the type of work he was doing. Then we drove to his home for the evening. As he entered the house, he excused himself to perform several activities: He went into his daughter's room to make sure the vaporizer was functioning properly. He placed a castor oil pack on the abdomen of the aging dog, a family favorite. Then he set about making what he called an "Edgar Cayce salad," following the rule of using three vegetables that grow above the ground for every one that grows below the ground. He combined twelve above-the-ground with four below-the-ground vegetables to make a marvelous salad for the evening meal.

The remarkable quality that I observed about this physician was the willingness, yes, eagerness, to work with these simple principles. There was something about him that I identified as *caring,* which is seriously absent in many of us. We know of many actions we could do to aid or benefit ourselves or others, but we do not *care* enough to put these principles into practice.

The word CARE can help us keep in mind the several factors which contribute to maintaining a healthy body. If utilized, the concepts involved may remind us of dimensions of our health that might otherwise be neglected. Each concept or element needs to be incorporated into our health programs. A physical program that does not give proper consideration to each of these aspects may be taxing on the body instead of beneficial to it. The word CARE refers, of course, to these considerations: Circulation, Assimilations, Relaxation and Eliminations. Let us consider these dimensions in order.

Circulation

There is within each of us a pattern for the perfect or healthy functioning of every system of our bodies. Healing comes from stimulating that perfect pattern in each system and giving it the chance to perform in the normal manner. However, a system which is constructed to be active cannot function properly if it is not kept active. Therefore, for optimum functioning, circulation must be enhanced.

The readings indicate that osteopathy should be the basis of all physical healing. I became interested in this statement and began to investigate the basic principles of osteopathy. I learned that instead of the emphasis being upon manipulation of the spine, it was rather upon the ability of the body to heal itself if given the proper circulation. If there are healthy cells, there will be healthy tissues and organs and, thus, a healthy body. To have healthy cells there must be proper circulation. The blood carries the proper nutrients, oxygen and water to the cells and carries away the toxins, residues or "drosses," as they are called in the readings. The purpose of osteopathy is to enhance circulation both mechanically and by coordinating the nerve impulses to the various systems of the body. The beneficial effects of osteopathic or chiropractic adjustments—some of which may also be obtained with regular massage—should not be underestimated in the health program of any individual.

Exercise, of course, is one major way to assure proper circulation throughout all systems of the body. The confusion in the minds of most

Americans between exercise and athletic conditioning has led many to overexert in trying to get into shape or to neglect the activity altogether because it seemed too demanding or too strenuous. The Edgar Cayce readings indicate that walking is the best exercise for most; apparently every one of us would be healthier if we were to take some time for regular walking. If walking is not possible, then the alternative exercise recommended by the readings is swimming. Other exercise equivalents include adjustments, massage and forms of hydrotherapy. Stretching exercises were recommended most, as in stretching the arms high overhead, rising on toes with an inhalation and then bending forward at the waist, moving the hands toward the toes with the exhalation. This is to be performed for as much as five minutes a day before an open window.

Another frequently recommended exercise is the head and neck exercise: moving the head forward three times, back three times, to the left three times, to the right three times; then circling all the way around—three circles to the right and then three circles to the left. This exercise, performed five minutes a time, three times a day may be very beneficial for the eyes and the other sensory systems in the head. Let us examine this exercise more carefully.

We have suggested that the proper health of the cell may be maintained with proper circulation. The head and neck exercise is a good illustration of how, through the movement of the musculature of the neck, there may be brought about the increased circulation to the head. This brings improved health to every cell within the systems in the head. The head and neck exercise does not exercise the eyes directly, but where there is enhanced circulation, then nearby systems also receive increased circulation, and thus health, as a result.

Assimilations

With our understanding of the necessity for each cell to receive its proper nutrients and to be cleansed of toxins and drosses, we may re-examine the role of assimilation. This includes not only the intake of proper nutrients and fluids, but also proper eating conditions of right attitudes and environment which affect the assimilative and digestive processes.

It is a simple and straightforward fact of biology that our attitudes and emotions affect the biochemistry of our bodily processes. It is also well known that positive and cheerful attitudes held during mealtime activate systems within the body that facilitate optimum assimilation of food, whereas negative or anxious attitudes work against proper assimilation. These considerations are not optional niceties, but rather they are simple lawful processes. We need not kid ourselves that we can properly assimilate our food if our attitudes or conversations are not of a positive nature.

Proper assimilation is enhanced by adequate intake of water, preferably a glass of water before the meal and a glass of water after the meal. If the body does not seem to desire this kind of intake, then it may be developed by beginning gradually to build up to this amount. With the practice will come the appetite for such an intake. Most of us need 6 to 8 glasses of water a day.

The need for proper mastication of foods is another well-known fact, which in practice is given little or inadequate consideration. The first experiment we conducted in our high school chemistry class was to test the sugar content of a soda cracker before and after mastication. When the fresh cracker is tested there is no indication of sugar. When it is chewed and tested again, sugar is present. The biological fact is that saliva is a necessary ingredient in the changing of unassimilable starches into assimilable sugars. This process can best take place through mastication of food in the mouth. If this step is not completed, it does *not* take place fully in the stomach or colon. This process is just one of several that are easily demonstrated as being important but often neglected in our lack of *caring* for proper assimilation of our food.

Many combinations of foods are helpful, but other combinations should be avoided. We should avoid taking citrus juice and milk at the same meal, avoid taking cream in our coffee and taking wine with our meals. Citrus juice and milk may both be beneficial, but they should not be taken together. Coffee taken properly is a food, but improperly—such as when it is old or stale or taken with cream and/or sugar—is detrimental to the body. A major problem with coffee occurs when there are not the proper eliminations from the colon. One who has elimination problems should be especially careful about an excessive intake of coffee. Red wine with dark bread, in moderation, may be beneficial; but contrary to popular notions about wine enhancing digestion, it should not be taken with the meal.

Pork should be avoided entirely with the exception of occasional portions of crisp bacon. Less of the red meats, more of fish, fowl and lamb will enhance bodily health. One meal a day, preferably lunch, should be of fresh vegetables alone. Cooked vegetables may then be taken in the evening meal. Vitamins, of course, are necessary and are best obtained in natural form through the proper selection of foods. If supplements are taken, they should be taken *irregularly* or in cycles, as a stimulus to the body to produce its own proper internal chemistry. Do not take vitamin supplements regularly and indefinitely, because then the body may lose its ability to extract those necessary vitamins from the foods eaten.

The normal functioning of the body should indicate in a litmus paper test of urine or saliva slightly toward the alkaline rather than the acid.

This may be achieved by proper activity as in exercise and by the taking of foods that tend to have an alkaline reaction in the body.

Carbonated drinks should rarely be taken as the carbonation itself is injurious to the kidneys. Fried foods should never be eaten. The french fried potato illustrates one of the least desirable forms of intake for the human body.

All of these recommendations from the readings should be considered not as optional moralities but as lawful processes. Let us consider, for example, the problem with fried foods. The readings indicate that there is an electrical activity functioning almost as poles of a battery between the liver and the kidneys. The ingestion of fried foods constitutes a special problem for the proper electrical balance to be maintained between these natural poles within the body.

Other considerations include: Two or three almonds a day may work against the tendency toward cancer or tumors. An apple a day may not be all that beneficial because apples taken with other foods are not recommended unless the apples are cooked. If fresh apples are eaten, they should be taken alone. Tomatoes are an especially good food, but these should be vine-ripened. Unless they are vine-ripened, they are inclined to be more toxic than beneficial to the body.

Relaxation

For millions, perhaps most of us, a lifelong pattern from birth through our adult years is resisting going to sleep and being reluctant to wake up. Obviously we have neither the proper attitude toward nor the proper evaluation of the importance of sleep. Sleep is clearly a universal requirement of all mankind and the reported exceptions to it are so rare and so dubious that it is improbable that anyone can get along well without regular sleep.

In the metabolic processes that take place in our bodies there are two phases: the anabolic, which is the building up of new tissues and cells, and the catabolic, which is the tearing down of old tissues and cells. The building-up process needs as much time and attention as the active, tearing down processes. If we fail to provide time for this for our systems, we may be contributing to an array of factors that may later cause disease and impaired functioning for us.

The Edgar Cayce readings indicate that seven and a half to eight hours' sleep is needed for most bodies. If you are one who says, "That's not true for me; I get along with six and a half or seven hours very well," you may be robbing yourself—not only physically but also mentally and spiritually—of the exercise of some normal and important functions of life. "[Sleep] is that needed for the physical body to recuperate, or to draw strength from the mental and spiritual powers or forces that are held as the ideals of the body." (2067-3)

If we miss the last 45 minutes of sleep, we may very well be cutting our dreaming period by 50 percent. Even if we seem to get by physically with less than an optimum amount of sleep, we are cutting ourselves short on some mental and spiritual work that is vital to our overall well-being. Since dreams are sources on occasion of information, inspiration, guidance, creative insights and spiritual experiences, the regular loss of dream time will contribute to the loss of some of these most valuable of human experiences. Thus the quality of our overall lives may be reduced immeasurably by neglecting to allow ourselves enough sleep.

In addition to getting the proper amount of sleep, we need to learn *how to relax*. It is a simple and easily learned skill at which everyone should become highly competent. Learning how to relax may enable us, once we go to bed, to fall asleep more quickly. We all face jobs and other types of challenge which we could meet far more effectively if we practiced relaxation techniques regularly during the day.

Three simple keys make for effective relaxation. First, we must hold a strong, positive or constructive mental pattern to counter whatever may be stressful. For many this is an affirmation; others experience it as prayer. Some recite Scripture or other valued literature that directs the thought processes toward that which is enhancing of life, joy and confidence. Second, we can consciously regulate our breathing. This may best be done just by observing the breath and making it more regular. To this you may add this simple procedure of inhaling slowly, saying silently to yourself, "I am"; and exhaling, saying "...relaxed." And then third, relaxing by *visualizing* with the imaginative forces of the mind that the various portions of the body *are* becoming more and more relaxed.

Many of us have assumed and made habitual, attitudinal and physical postures that make for tensions. We need to observe our inclinations to maintain certain mental attitudes and to hold physical postures that are tension producing rather than relaxing.

If we have trouble falling asleep or if we awaken during the night and are unable to return to sleep, we should remember again and again this saying, "Why worry when you can pray?" and then use that as an affirmation to orient us to a consciousness of prayer—especially prayers of thanksgiving and prayers for others in need. We will find then that the time awake will be very well spent, and also that there will be a reduction of anxiety both about those things that worry us and also about the loss of sleep itself. By this practice we may find that prayer is indeed very soporific.

As aids in falling asleep, gentle exercise for the large muscles of the lower body, a glass of warm milk with a teaspoon of honey, reading something

inspirational, and the practice of prayer and meditation are always beneficial.

Dr. Harold Reilly maintains that one hour of massage is worth four hours of normal sleep or other rest. If we find ourselves running a sleep debt, we might do well to avail ourselves of this marvelous healing modality of the full body massage. And we cannot discount the relaxation gained from recreation, on physical, emotional and mental levels.

On one occasion Edgar Cayce said that five to seven minutes of meditation immediately upon awakening might be worth several hours of normal rest.

We need to be aware of the importance of a well-balanced life; and as we budget time for rest, relaxation and recreation, we may be assured of a richer life in every other respect.

Eliminations

Proper eliminations are vital to the health of every organ, tissue and cell in the body, and yet so little attention is given to this extremely important process. There are, as we all know, four systems of the body that participate in the overall eliminative processes: the lungs, the skin, the kidneys and the bowels. For the lungs to be functioning properly there must, of course, be some form of exercise that is vigorous enough to cause deep breathing as a regular process. Smoking should be moderate, if indulged in at all. Posture should be given considerable attention. It is well known that the muscles involved in posture in the human body (critical to proper breathing) do not naturally in and of themselves maintain proper tone. Good posture requires attention and habitual practice.

The skin, of course, as part of the eliminative system is invaluable in its contribution. Therefore, it should be cared for as any other system—not just for cosmetic purposes but also for the purposes of general health. Periodic whole body massage with oils, such as peanut and olive oils, provides a food value to the skin and musculature. Here is a specially designed oil from the Edgar Cayce readings: "To six ounces of peanut oil, add: Olive Oil—2 ounces, Rosewater—2 ounces, Lanolin, dissolved—1 tablespoonful." (1968-7)

For care of the skin the readings recommend a pure castile soap for most. Deodorants must not be of the anti-perspirant type that closes the pores of the skin.

Optimal functioning of the kidneys requires six to eight glasses of water a day along with eliminating certain foods from the diet that work counter to the proper functioning. These include carbonated drinks, quantities of red meat and quantities of alcohol.

Proper care of the colon includes three major considerations. First, proper diet, including raw vegetables that give the necessary roughage; second, proper and appropriate cleansing of the colon when needed both with a mild laxative or a colonic or enema. These are never to be depended upon as a regular part of the routine nor should we expect to eliminate them completely. As a matter of fact the bowels should never go through a 24-hour period without elimination and we should never retire for the night without there having been a cleansing of the colon sometime during the day. The scientifically administered high colonic is frequently recommended in the readings as a periodic part of our health care. The home administered enema, carefully and properly given, may be very valuable. This enema may include two sequences: the first, with a teaspoon of salt and a teaspoon of soda for each quart of water to keep toxins from being reabsorbed; and the second sequence, with a tablespoon of Glyco-Thymoline for each quart of water to enhance the cleansing of the colon. The third consideration is taking the necessary time for proper eliminations when our bodies are prepared to function in this manner.

Osteopathic adjustments, exercise, dietary considerations all contribute to proper eliminations.

Conclusion

With all aspects of your health program, see it doing what you would have it do. Hold the attitude of expecting beneficial results. Know the results will be good.

. . .let the attitudes be—everything that is eaten, as well as every activity—purposeful in conception, constructive in nature. Analyze that! Purposeful in activity, constructive in nature!
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Part of the consciousness of the new age is that every individual must not only assume responsibility for his own health but should embrace such an opportunity in a joyous manner as an act of thanksgiving for experiencing these bodies which are the temples of the living God. *Care* is the key word and, if we will awaken that *caring* deeply within ourselves and with this opportunity make the body a true temple for approaching the Divine, we will find that this CARE formula may become an excellent basis for a positive approach to health and to a more helpful, creative and joyous life.

Herbert Bruce Puryear

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